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ABSTRACT

This paper discusses efforts in various countries to encourage family planning. The role of the family planning worker and the school educator are constrasted, the former's being to train, motivate, and give information. The school teacher's role is to integrate population education in the curriculum of the formal educational system. A series of nine propositions are presented and briefly discussed as a means of presenting some of the problems and issues in population education. It is hoped that a model will evolve from this type of effort. (DJB)

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INTEGRATION OF POPULATION AND FAMILY PLANNING EDUCATION INTO CURRICULA OF GRADE SCHOOLS, SECONDARY SCHOOLS, MEDICAL SCHOOLS AND UNIVERSITIES

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Family planning programs from the early days to the present have always had an information and education component. This component has been necessary since a change in the behavior of individuals has been a prerequisite for the effective practice of family planning. Such changes can not be imposed externally and are based on at least a minimum level of understanding regardless of the methods of family planning that are used. As voluntary programs have expanded in scope and as family planning has been adopted as public policy for the attainment of both family and societal goals, information and education have come to have an even more important role. It is therefore appropriate that attention should be given in a family planning conference such as this to the subject of information and education.

Of special significance is the allocation of time in this conference to the consideration of school curricula since the education of young people has had a low priority until recently. Even though the ultimate responsibility for school curricula is in the hands of the professional educator, there are several reasons why family planning specialists at a conference such as this can fruitfully give attention to the school curricula.

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In the first place, the age structure of developing countries is such that a very large number of young people move annually into the age level where marriages take place and conceptions may occur. The reproduction rate of these new cohorts of potential conceptors tends to be high and any program which has the potential of contributing to the reduction of that rate through later marriages, delayed first pregnancies, and early spacing is of importance to family planning leaders.

Secondly, the development of a basic understanding regarding the population problems and policies of one's country is a very important goal. The structure of formal education systems makes the attainment of that goal much easier for those attending school than for the adult population who are difficult to reach with systematic programs. Communication with young adults by family planning workers and others concerning population issues should be easier and more effective if these young adults have had an orientation when they were students.

Thirdly, family planning leaders have frequently been the ones who have stimulated an interest in population and family planning education among educators. The sharing of experiences among those who have been engaging in this action and the encouragement of similar action on the part of others is a desirable outcome of this conference. Finally, some of the professional educators who are also interested in family planning have largely focussed their attention on adults. These educators have a contribution to make to the education of young people and they may be stimulated to turn their talents to this group.

In order to understand more clearly the special problem involved in education of young people, consideration should first be given to those activities generally referred to as education which are an integral part of a well-developed family planning program. The activities are of four different types and only one of them is education in the special way in which the term will be used here.

The first activity is the <u>training</u> of family planning personnel. These personnel are employed or have volunteered to work in an action program. They frequently need to extend their existing competencies to fit the needs of the program, and so training is provided. The focus is on preparing the personnel to engage effectively in pre-determined tasks rather than to explore objectively a set of fundamental issues.

The other three activities involve the persons for whom family planning programs are provided. One of these activities, frequently referred to as motivation, involves communication of some type designed to convince someone that he can and should practice family planning. The goal of the communication is predetermined and the content including the amount and kind of information is selected with that goal in mind. Mass media as well as face-to-face contacts may be used. The test of the effectiveness of this type of activity is the acceptance of this goal and not the level of understanding or insight achieved.

Another activity involving the potential conceptor is one characterized by information-giving. The practice of family planning is likely to be effective only if at least one of the sexual partners, and preferably both, have basic information concerning the method or methods being employed. The amount of information is usually not extensive and is typically provided either in a group session or personally by a professional or para-professional worker. This may be supplemented by published materials given to the client.

In each of the three activities referred to above -- training, motivation, and information-giving -- those responsible may in fact go far beyond the basic focus of the activity. The separation between motivation and information-giving may not be made in field activities. The client may want a great deal of information before he becomes convinced that he should be engaged in family planning. However, these activities are usually circumbscribed and few clinics are likely to refuse to provide family planning service to a client on the basis that he is not able to demonstrate that he has a good understanding of human reproduction, can describe accurately how a number of contraceptive methods work and can identify the family and social values of family planning.

The fourth activity is adult education concerning population and family planning and includes those efforts to reach the citizen in the society, whether potential conceptors or not, in a setting in which the goal is deeper understanding and careful inquiry into the fundamental issues involved. Persuasion and information-giving may well occur in such settings but these would be by-products rather than the major goals.

This choice to use training, motivation, and information-giving rather than education as terms of reference is designed to emphasize the differences between the family planning worker and school educator in their goals and methods. These differences are inherent in the contrasting functions of an action program and an education system, even though action programs have education components and education systems have action components.

The present education component of family planning is a reflection of the clinical approach that characterizes the family planning programs. This is in part a function of the state of our contraceptive knowledge and technology. The current methods that have a high enough rate of effectiveness to satisfy the specialist place the medical profession in a central role. Since that profession has a very high status in most societies, the family planning movement has profited by medical leadership. One consequence of this fact is that in the minds of many people, family planning is essentially a medical activity.

The clinical approach is also reenforced by the current assumption that the basic problem is one of providing an effective method for family planning for the populace. We need to be reminded on occasion that a number of European countries, both Protestant and Catholic, and the United States and Canada, had very low birth rates long before our current technology of contraception was available, before universal schooling had been attained and before public policies concerning family planning were adopted.

All of us are pleased that technological advances have been made and look forward eagerly to the development of a good, simple, cheap method. We also hold in respect and admiration those of our medical friends who have been willing to give leadership to family planning, frequently at enormous personal sacrifice. We have had to rely on these technological advances and on our medical colleagues because most people have not desperately wanted to limit their family size.

This analysis has been presented in order to make clear that the educational tasks of the schools is a broad one in which attention to family planning is a part of a more comprehensive program. In the discussion presented below, this larger framework will become more apparent.

Education in the Formal Education System -- A Generational Approach

The integration of population education in the curriculum of the formal education system at all levels is a potentially significant development which is illustrative of the more comprehensive framework referred to above. Within the past two years a number of countries including several in this region have begun to work seriously at the development of a program in schools, teacher training institutions and universities. UNESCO sponsored a regional workshop in Bangkok in the fall of 1970. India has established a curriculum planning unit for population education in the Ministry of Education following a national conference sponsored by the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Health and Family Planning. In the Philippines several national workshops have been held within the past year and further activities are now underway. Indonesia has taken several important steps in this area during the past year.

In other parts of the world, several significant events have occurred recently. In the fall of 1969, IPPF called together a Working Group to advise

IPPF on the development of policies and programs in the area of education. The results of this conference are contained in the publication entitled "Responsible Parenthood and Sex Education." This report is worthy of the attention of all family planning workers interested in education.

In Chile and in Colombia national seminars have been held within the past six months in which educational leaders have made plans for the development of population education within their formal education systems.

Because of the relative recency of this development no models of fully working programs can be presented such as are available in many areas of family planning. However, the experience is extensive enough to permit an identification of several important problems and issues.

In the consideration of these problems and issues, the term "population education" will be used to refer to this area. Other terms are used such as family life education, sex education, family planning education, population awareness education, and responsible parenthood and sex education. This variety is due in part to somewhat different emphases in program and in part to the fact that consensus on a term has not yet developed. The terms family life education and sex education have their own history and broad meanings which were developed prior to our present concerns. Family planning education and some of the other terms, may suggest that the family is the only social unit of concern. In any event, each country will need to work out its own program and can select the terms which are most appropriate and acceptable. The IPPF Working Group noted: "To describe the main theme of our discussion, such phrases as 'family life education,' 'sex education' and 'preparation for family life' have been used. To each of them there can be objections, depending on the cultural setting in which they are used."

"We are agreed that, just as there is a need for education in the problem of population growth and the means to limit and space families, so there is a need for education in the nature of human reproduction, and in the ways in which people can develop responsible and satisfying relationships with one another."

As a means of presenting some of the problems and issues in population education, a series of propositions will be presented and briefly discussed.

1. <u>The content and instructional methods used should be pedagogically sound</u>. This proposition is presented first since the acceptance or rejection of this proposition will color all of the subsequent propositions. The focus of concern here is that the education system in this area as in others should insure that the content which is presented is factually correct and is not distorted to present a point of view. Of particular importance is a pedagogical approach which recognizes that fundamental human values are involved and therefore different interpretations of the meaning of the content may well exist. The technique which educators have developed for dealing with subject areas about which there may be strongly held personal postions will be required in teaching in this area.

The approach here is therefore different from that discussed earlier where education of potential conceptors was being considered. As noted earlier, the family planning worker has a clear point of view which he presents when he encourages potential conceptors to practice family planning. The school educator is an educator, not a family planning worker. His first responsibility is to provide a pedagogically sound education in all areas of instruction including population education.

Family planning leaders should accept this approach with the same assurance that they accept other content and methods in the education system. Students who have learned about the causes and consequences of population changes, that the planning of family size is easily possible, and who have considered the pros and cons of different population policies including family planning may be expected to make more reasoned judgments, when they marry, about their own reproductive behavior.

2. <u>The responsibility for the introduction of population education into the formal education system rests with the educators</u>. The basic theme of this proposition is likely to be accepted by educators and family planning specialists. However, in some settings educators have been slow to initiate action and on occasion the family planning specialists have been the ones who have gained a body of experience through pilot projects and by other means. It is sometimes difficult for these specialists to adjust to the new circumstances occasioned by the growing acceptance by education leaders of population education as an integral part of the total education system.

The problems which arise are partly personal and partly substantive. Family planning specialists may feel that their experiences and leadership is not adequately appreciated. But in addition, the educators as specialists in their own field may develop patterns for the schools which are different from those which the family planning specialists have come to favor.

3. <u>Population Education should be integrated into the curriculum rather than added as a new subject</u>. This approach is believed to be desirable for both political and pedagogical reasons. On pedagogical grounds the infusion of population education into various subject areas at different grade levels has many advantages. For the student, the content can be more easily related to the

other phases of his education. Units dealing with various aspects of popu tion education can be developed for the various grade levels which take into account the level of maturity of the student. Since the dropout rate is generally high, particularly at the ends of the primary and middle cycles, it is important that appropriately graded instruction be available at all levels.

The infusion approach does multiply the difficulties of providing adequately trained teachers. However, the problems are more easily managed than those which would arise if a special course were instituted at one or more levels in the school system.

4. <u>The Content of population education must be worked out in detail by education specialists in each country</u>. Curriculum development specialists in many developing countries have in the past relied heavily on models and even textbooks available from outside their own system. This is rapidly disappearing. The most frequent request received by those of us who have been working in population education is for instructional materials currently in use. This interest in reviewing such materials is understandable and it should not be discouraged. However, the assumption that such materials may be easily adapted for use is largely an illusion. There is no way to avoid the difficult and time-consuming task of developing instructional materials for each national education system.

Several factors are at work which place a premium on the development of original materials. In the first place, the process of infusing population education content into the existing structure of the curriculum of the education system of a country requires that careful attention be given to the existing syllabi and instructional materials. Instructional materials developed in one educational setting are likely to require more than minor adaptation when used in another setting.

Furthermore the basic approach to population education must of necessity be formulated in full appreciation of the particular social and educational context in which it is to be introduced. It is of course true that there is a general body of relevant knowledge which is essentially universal and this can be drawn upon for part of the curriculum. However, a significant portion of the basic content will be unique to each country. In addition the decisions concerning the aspects to be emphasized can only be made by the educational leaders in a particular country.

Another consideration is the basic curriculum pattern and organizational structure of the education system of each country. At an abstract level one can see great similarity in the education systems in different countries in both curriculum and organizational structure. Instruction is usually provided in primary, middle, and secondary schools, and in colleges, universities and professional schools. The curriculum includes very many of the same subjects. However, when a specific curriculum innovation is being considered for a particular education system these abstract similarities are of limited operational value.

One aspect of particular importance is the extent to which instruction is organized around the academic subject areas or disciplines. National education systems vary in the extent to which they give attention to problems of immediate social significance. The community school approaches used to a degree in the Philippines and in Taiwan are illustrations of an educational approach in which problems of the country receive attention in the school. The curriculum developer for population education is clearly confronted with the need to attend to these unique aspects of his own education system.

Cultural values characteristic of a particular society also impose another constraint on the choice of content to be included in any instructional programs. A number of different content areas could be considered for inclusion in an education system which would increase the level of understanding of the future generation of conceptors. Population dynamics at the national and international levels is clearly relevant. The body of knowledge concerning the significance of population dynamics at the family and community level is less well developed but this is directly pertinent. This can usually be presented without objection.

Instruction concerning human reproduction is a more sensitive area. In western countries, content in this area has until relatively recently been given very little attention. From the content of biology textbooks, the conclusion could well be reached that knowledge concerning reproductive processes for frogs is of much more value than the corresponding information concerning human beings.

Systematic attention to sex as a fundamental and personal aspect of human life is an even more sensitive content area in many settings. The Working Group report to IPPF referred to earlier expressed that point of view that human sexuality was a basic area for educators but recognized that "in some countries, information on planned parenthood can only be introduced in courses describing as 'family life education,' yet in others it is easier to discuss human reproduction where family planning programmes have been established. In one country it is necessary to avoid references to the word 'sex' if programmes are to be introduced; in another, to omit the phrase 'sex education' would merely be to mislead people; in a third, care has to be taken to avoid phrases implying that methods of contraception are being explained, even if they are."

Whether specific and detailed information should be given concerning means for contraception in a population education program is clearly a question which

the educators of each country must decide. For population education as for each of the content areas of the curriculum, the educators face the difficult task of reconciling the special pedagogical problem inherent in the content being taught with the cultural and political values of the community.

5. The content of population education should be developed with full appreciation of related education and activities program addressed to adults. A number of the activities in the family planning field involve the use of communication media for which the audience reached can not be tightly controlled. Newspaper and magazine articles, radio and television programs and announcements, public posters on display, leaflets, village meetings and similarly planned communication intended for potential conceptors or the adult populace inevitably reach young people. Educators may choose to ignore privately published materials which may come to the attention of young people but they can not responsibly ignore the content of mass media which are issued as an expression of public policy. At the very least, teachers need to be in position to help young people to deal with the questions and issues that are raised for young people as a result of their unintended exposure to mass media.

A more positive approach would be characterized by close liaison between education leaders and those planning various aspects of population programs so that the educators can plan an educationally sound counterpart to public actions. Such liaison could be effected without modifying the primary responsibility of the educator for determining the content of the school program.

6. Realistic goals for population education should be formulated. The key term here is "realistic." Formal education systems are only one of a number of social settings that contribute to the knowledge and values of young people. Many of these other settings such as the family, peer groups, and religious organizations are ones in which the development of a particular point of view

is an accepted if not always explicit goal. Education systems are not value free but their explicit emphasis on skill development and acquisition of knowledge distinguishes them from other social institutions. As noted earlier in another connection our premise is that population education is education and not propaganda or persuasion to a particular point of view.

In view of this inherent limitation in the education system in introducing new values and attitudes in a setting where the other social institutions are deliberately or implicitly emphasizing traditional values, those interested in population education both within as well as outside the education system should be realistic in the level of their expectation.

7. A long-range strategy for introducing population education should be formulated. In the countries of this region most of the students are enrolled in government schools, and the curriculum of these schools is specified in at least broad terms in official syllabi. Similarly a large portion of the teachers are trained in government sponsored or supervised institutions. The curriculum of privately sponsored schools is strongly influenced by the official syllabi. Programs at the university level are usually under less tight supervision.

With this as a general framework, curriculum innovations must receive the sanction of the Ministry of Education, or the provincial or state education units where decentralization of control exists. The problem for the innovator in education is to gain the support of the educational leaders.

However, in systems that are highly centralized as well as those with a large measure of local control, serious changes in the curriculum are difficult to achieve. The elements which go into educational process are complex and closely interrelated. Innovations involved carefully developed designs that

can fit into an ongoing system, appropriate instructional materials for students and staff, some measure of training of the staff, support of supervisor and inspectors, a cadre of specialists, and a system of assessment of the program. A decision by the Ministry of Education to introduce population education is an important step, but it is only the beginning in a long series of actions necessary to effect a change.

In instances where the decision has been preceded by demonstration programs in local schools, some experience may have been acquired that will be useful to the Ministry, but such experiences will not automatically answer a number of questions that will arise in considering a large scale program. The strategy for introducing population education will include plans for meeting the following problems:

a. Identification and perhaps training of specialists who can give leadership to this new area.

b. Determination of the points in the current syllabi and instructional materials at which relevant content is already present and where content would need to be dropped or modified.

c. Decision as to the order in which different units and levels of the education system should receive attention. Should the first attention be given to the college and university level with each lower level being attended to in turn, or is the middle school a better place to start with gradual expansion of attention up and down from the middle school?

d. Decision as to whether a complete curriculum design for the entire education system is necessary prior to intensive work at any one level.

e. Assessment of the extent to which field experimentation through pilot projects or other means will be used in formulating a program for general use.

f. Appraisal of the relative values in providing general training for teachers while instructional materials are being developed, or in giving first priority to the development of instructional materials which can serve in turn as a basis for training teachers.

g. Decision concerning whether new basic research in the knowledge and attitudes of students and teachers is required before a curriculum can be designed and instructional materials developed.

h. Consideration of the state of public opinion to ascertain the extent to which parent education will be required as a population education program is introduced.

Judgments concerning these and similar problem areas will contribute to the formulation of a plan for introducing population education. These problems are not different except in detail from those which educators face in building a strategy for other innovations in the curriculum.

8. Family planning leaders have important functions to play as stimulators, resource personnel, critics, and supporters. As noted earlier, population education is education and will of necessity be the responsibility of educators. However, family planning leaders have a special interest in this area and can assist in a number of ways. In many countries educational leaders have been lagging behind other sections of the society in responding to this great social concern. One role which family planning leaders have played and should continue to play is that of encouraging educational leaders to recognize the value to young people and to society in general of introducing population education into the education system.

Since some family planning personnel have been engaging in education of their own staff members, they have a body of experience and resource materials

with which educators ought to be acquainted. In addition some family planning personnel can serve fruitfully as resource people for education leaders and for teachers at the local level.

As population education programs are introduced into the education system, family planning personnel can serve both as supporters and critics. As citizens with a special interest in this content area, family planning personnel can help to build public acceptance when difficulties arise. At the same time, they can be friendly critics, assisting in the evaluation of the program as it develops.

9. <u>High priority should be given to universities and professional schools as centers for the general education of leaders, the preparation of professional personnel, and the development of basic knowledge on which policies and programs may be built</u>. Most of the propositions stated above apply to higher education as well as to the school level. However, higher education does present several new dimensions. Students are at an age level where they are likely to have a more immediate interest in this subject and the curriculum content will need to take this into account. At points where general education for all students is not a part of the curriculum, special approaches may need to be developed which insure that students in the various specialties have access to appropriate education. This may mean that extra-mural activities may need to be planned.

Special attention should be given to the curriculum in a number of the professional schools whose graduates are likely to be involved in population and family planning programs as a part of their future professional work. Students going into teaching would be included in any program which is designed to serve the school system. In addition, social workers, and home economists are likely to find themselves associated with family planning programs in one capacity or another. Social scientists and demographers are needed to provide technical services as well as to contribute to building the knowledge base.

Given the central role which medical personnel play in family planning programs, the medical students are a particularly important group. They need to receive a general education in population dynamics and public policies concerning population. In their substantive work in medicine, students should be trained to provide contraceptive services and should be acquainted with the research frontiers in this area. In addition, students should be familiarized with the administrative aspects of family planning services.

Conclusions

The nine propositions stated above do not constitute an exhaustive list of the relevant propositions. No detailed curriculu pattern has been presented nor could such a pattern be presented if one accepts the proposition that such a pattern can only be developed by the educators within each country. Furthermore, since the instructional problems vary with each grade level and within each subject taught, general statements about the content of the curriculum are difficult to make. For these reasons the nine propositions deal largely with the process of developing the curricula rather than the specific content. It is hoped that these propositions will serve as a basis for intensive consideration of process and will stimulate collaboration with professional educators in the development of population education.

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